

ICT Policy

Mission Statement

As well as being an important educational resource, the ability to use ICT effectively is a vital life skill in modern society.

“Our aim is to produce learners (pupils and teachers) who are confident and effective users of ICT”.

We intend to achieve that aim by:

- 1) Teaching ICT skills
- 2) Ensuring that ICT is incorporated into all subjects on the curriculum
- 3) Helping all children to use ICT with purpose and enjoyment
- 4) Helping all children to develop the necessary skills to exploit ICT

Rationale

Why does our school use ICT?

- The pupils in our school need to be IT literate.
- We want to provide the best possible education for all our pupils.
- We want to provide a powerful and up to date teaching resource for all our teachers.
- ICT is used for more effective administration.
- ICT is used to help children in need of learning support.
- ICT will be used to provide more effective communication with parents.
- ICT will be used to communicate with teachers and pupils in other schools.

To what use will ICT be put?

- School Administration-pupil details, standard letters, newsletters, book lists etc.
- Word Processing and printing of children’s work.
- Research on the internet.
- Communication via email.
- Storage of Records e.g. Micra-T & Sigma-T Results.
- Software for Special Needs pupils e.g. Word Shark, Starspell, Touch, Type, Read & Spell,
- SoundsTo Words etc
- Extra-Curricular activities e.g. Scratch after school
- Licenced software e.g. Reading Eggs is available to all pupils

Advantages of ICT:

- The most up to date information may be accessed speedily.
- Presentation of work is greatly enhanced.
- Pupils with special needs are greatly empowered though use of ICT.
- The computer has endless patience when used for drill and practice applications.
- The computer can allow for individual differences.
- All children find computers a fascinating source of learning.

Disadvantages of ICT:

- There are major financial implications in equipping and upgrading a school with ICT.
- Researching software and lesson plans is very time consuming.
- Curriculum overload is an ever present problem.
- Teachers need to continually update their ICT skills-some teachers lack confidence using ICT.

Summary of School Audit

Current Hardware:

- Mainstream and Support Classrooms are equipped with Smart interactive whiteboards and teaching laptops. All these laptops are networked and have broadband access to the internet.
- The Smartboards come with their own software. These transform the classroom into an interactive learning environment. The interactive whiteboards enable anything that can be seen or done on a computer screen to be projected onto a whiteboard. It is possible to hide, reveal or highlight text and images to stimulate discussion; encourage active participation through interactive activities and engage the senses with sounds, colours and videos. The software allows access to thousands of resources and sample lessons.
- The pupils and teachers can write on the Smartboards using the pens provided or can avail of the touch sensitive capability of the board to write or manipulate activities by hand.
- In the Computer Room there are: 19 computers, a laser printer, a scanner, a data projector and white screen. All those computers are networked.
- There are 9 laptops for use by pupils in Learning Support.
- Computers and laptops are connected to the photocopier.
- Most classrooms also have an individual printer
- There is a computer in the Secretary's office which is networked to the photocopier and a laser printer. Secretary also has a scanner
- There is a computer, a printer and a scanner in the Principal's office. The Principal's computer is networked

Current Usage of ICT for Pupils:

- Current usage of software includes literacy development through Reading Eggs, numeracy Manga-High Maths; word processing, and typing skills; internet work; communication using e-mails; presentation of project work.
- Computers are used as a medium of teaching and learning in classrooms.
- Computers and appropriate software are used in the Support Rooms.

Teaching Staff

Total Staff: 18

Number familiar with ICT: 18

Number competent to use ICT in teaching: 18

Special Needs:

Interactive Whiteboards and teaching laptops are provided in the Learning Support Rooms as we recognise the potential of ICT to enhance the learning opportunities for pupils with special needs. Children with specific needs are using ICT to provide alternative and complementary educational experiences.

More able Students:

We see an opportunity to use ICT to challenge and extend the educational opportunities for pupils with above average attainment through more challenging activities and tasks; presenting work/projects using ICT.

Staff Development

Members of staff have training on the use and educational application of ICT, through initial teacher training, summer courses, online courses etc. In addition, the staff members contribute to each other's professional development in ICT through informal discussion. During the development of our e-Learning Plan it was agreed that some time from staff meetings could be devoted to staff members demonstrating aspects of their ICT expertise, sharing knowledge of suitable websites etc.

ICT Co-Ordination:

Mary Murphy holds responsibility for ICT.

Maintenance:

The ICT co-ordinator carries out day to day maintenance and trouble shooting. The school has a maintenance contract with Deycom Computer Services Ltd., Carlow. The caretaker ensures that lenses on data projectors are free of dust by cleaning them regularly.

Health and Safety Aspects:

- Dedicated power points have been installed for all computers, and fused plugs used.
- Blinds have been fitted in the computer room and classrooms.
- There is internet access for everybody using school premises.
- With regard to the Internet, an Acceptable Use School Policy on the Internet has been in place for many years. Children only use computers while supervised and the school uses the school's broadband service, which has a stringent filtering system. Students are not permitted to access social networking or shopping sites.
- Eating and drinking while using the computer are forbidden, and desk space should be tidy with no food, liquid present while the computer is being used.
- Other ICT equipment such as digital cameras may only be used under supervision.

The Schools' Goals Regarding ICT

Technology Integration:

- Our aim is that technology be used to support the teaching and learning in all areas of the curriculum and in all classrooms.

What should be taught in ICT to pupils in our school?

- A list of what should be taught in ICT is outlined in the school's E-Learning Plan

Children receiving Learning Support:

- Using literacy & phonic software: Word Shark, Starspell, Touch, Type, Read & Spell.

Purchasing

Hardware Purchase:

- ICT co-ordinator in conjunction with Principal and staff is responsible for purchase of appropriate hardware.

School website:

- The school hosts a website at <http://www.bunclodyns.com>
- The Principal daily updates the information on the website
- School newsletters and other news items are regularly be added.
- School policies that are relevant to parents are available on this site.
- Pupils' work is published e.g. Art, Poetry

Class blog / School blog

- The ICT co-ordinator organised training for teachers in the development of class blogs through the local Education Centre. Pupils' work will be uploaded to the blogs.
- Parental permission sought to allow use of photos of groups of children at work. No individual pupil will be featured or identified.

Review of ICT Policy

As ICT is such a valuable tool for learning and curriculum implementation, its use is continuously under review by the teaching staff. Matters such as the website, new software, time-tabling, or difficulties with equipment are discussed.

A formal review and updating of the policy will be undertaken every year by the staff. The aim of this review will be to ensure that the potential for ICT is maximised in the school and that the considerable funds invested are not wasted. The Board of Management will discuss the outcome of such reviews and ratify them as it sees fit.

This policy updated March 2013

Ratified by the Board of Management on 19th March 2013

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

It is envisaged that the AUP will be reviewed annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to indicate that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

School's Strategy

The school employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems is used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software is used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of memory keys in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Pupils will observe good "netiquette" (i.e., etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

World Wide Web

- Pupils will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Pupils will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Pupils will be familiar with copyright issues relating to online learning.
- Pupils will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- Pupils will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.

Email

- Pupils will use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
- Pupils will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Pupils will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Pupils will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
- Pupils will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

School Website / School Blog / Class Blog

- Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the World Wide Web.
- The publication of pupil work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
- Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.

- Digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual pupils will not be published on the school website, school blog or class blog. Instead photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities.
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages, school blog and class blog.
- Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Legislation

Information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988

Support Structures

The school will inform pupils and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

This policy updated March 2013

Ratified by the Board of Management on 19th March 2013

Acceptable Use Policy Permission Form

Please review the attached school Internet Acceptable Use Policy, sign and return this permission form to the Principal.

School Name: Our Lady of Lourdes NS,

Name of Pupil: _____

Class/Year: _____

Pupil

I agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy on the use of the Internet. I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the school.

Pupil's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian

1. As the parent or legal guardian of the above pupil, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for my son or daughter or the child in my care to access the Internet. I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes.

I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the school to provide for online safety but the school cannot be held responsible if pupils access unsuitable websites.

I accept the above paragraph
(Please tick as appropriate)

I do not accept the above paragraph

2. In relation to the school website, I accept that, if the school considers it appropriate, my child's schoolwork may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing children's work on the school website.

I accept the above paragraph
(Please tick as appropriate)

I do not accept the above paragraph

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____
